REMARKS

By the foregoing amendments, Applicants have updated the references to related applications and revised the Abstract to remove the basis for the Examiner's objection thereto, so Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the corresponding objections. They have also canceled claims 1, 7-9, 12, 24-37, 39, 42, 49, 51, and 54, amended claims 2, 3, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 38, 40, 41, 43-48, 50, 52, 53, 55, and 57-60, and added new claims 61-69. After the amendment, claims 2-6, 10, 11, 13-23, 38, 40, 41, 43-48, 52-53, and 55-69 are pending.

In the Office action dated October 3, 2005, the Examiner objected to the declaration for its failure to include the inventors' addresses. Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw that objection because the applicable Rules provision, 37 C.F.R. § 1.63(c)(1), applies only if the application was not, as the instant one was, accompanied by an application data sheet that provides that information.

The invention is directed to an advance in backup-location maintenance of backup information from which source data can be restored at a source location. U.S. Patent No. 6,460,055 to Midgley et al. describes an advantageous approach to this task. Specifically, the prior-art Midgley et al. system monitors writes to the source-data device and sends the remote location a journal that identifies those locations and the values written to them.

The approach described in the instant application's specification reduces the bandwidth that transmitting such backup information requires. As the prior-art Midgley

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et al. arrangement does, the embodiments referred to in the specification's paragraph 0046—i.e., "the embodiments in which the detecting agent includes a file system filter,"—monitor writes and thereby identify the locations to which data have been written. Unlike that priorart arrangement, though, those embodiments are not described as sending the backup location any content (as opposed to addresses) recorded by that monitoring. Instead, as paragraph 0048 says, "At storage time, . . . the contents of the changed locations detected by the detecting agent 465 can be copied from the policy data files 475 stored on the data storage device 470 to the delta file 590 stored on the backup storage device 570."

That is, although the changed locations are identified whenever writes to them occur, the contents to be sent in response to such identification are obtained at storage time. This results in the backup location's receiving the contents of each location whose contents differ from what they were at the last backup, but it does not result in transmission of intermediate values; a location whose contents changed more than once since the last backup has only its last value sent. So the claimed invention enables a backup system to reduce the bandwidth that transmitting the backup data requires.

Applicants' specification is not the first to disclose keeping transmission bandwidth that low, but their way of doing so is more efficient than the ways described in the prior art of record. One of those ways is the approach that U.S. Patent No. 5,999,947 to Zollinger et al. exemplifies. Zollinger et al. implement their Fig. 1's remote clients 48 in remote terminals such as laptops that are connected to a server 68 only intermittently. The server maintains a table 20 of which each remote terminal maintains a copy that gets updated when that terminal connects to the server. Specifically, a differencing engine 30 generates and

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sends to the remote terminal a list 38 of the changes by which given versions can be updated to later versions. It arrives at the change list by making version comparisons, so it sends no intermediate values. However, although the Zollinger et al. approach thus saves channel bandwidth, the processor time required to do so can be prodigious; Zollinger et al. have to compare complete versions of all the data being backed up.

The prior-art Midgley et al. patent describes an approach that is less computation-intensive than Zollinger et al.'s but that still does not exhibit the efficiency that the present invention enables a backup system to provide. As is explained in the passage that begins in line 66 of Midgley et al.'s column 21 and extends through line 22 of its column 22, Midgley et al.'s prior-art system includes a coalescence operation. That operation can be used to cull duplicates from the journal that results from monitoring writes to the disk. Specifically, that operation identifies the locations that the journal lists more than once, and, for such locations, the system dispenses with sending any journaled contents but the last.

In contrast, although embodiments of Applicants' invention may use coalescence for other purposes, it does not require coalescence in order to keep transmission bandwidth low. This is because at storage time it merely obtains from, say, the source files themselves the contents of those locations that the journal has identified as written to, and it sends only changed contents thus obtained. So Applicants' invention enables the backup system to achieve low transmission bandwidth more efficiently than the prior art does.

As amended, all of Applicants' independent claims define this advance. Claim 61, for example, recites that, although it is "by monitoring writes to files in the source storage system since the previous storage time" that the there-defined method "identif[ies] locations

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in the source storage system where changes have been made since that previous time," what it stores in the backup storage system in response are "contents that at that storage time occupy locations thus identified." The other independent claims include similar limitations, so they all define patentable subject matter, as do the dependent claims, at least by virtue of their dependence on the independent claims. Applicants therefore request that all claims remaining in the application be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Patent Group Foley Hoag, LLP 155 Seaport Blvd.

Boston, MA 02210-2600

Joseph Alborn, Reg. No. 28,283

Attorney for Applicants Tel. No. (617) 832-1134 Fax. No. (617) 832-7000

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